

COVID-19 Water Quality Monitoring Guidance for Water Systems Serving Only Closed Facilities

We understand that many of our Non-Transient Non-Community (NTNC) and Transient Non-Community (TNC) water systems serve schools, daycares, restaurants, churches, campgrounds, and other business that may be closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We know the COVID-19 pandemic is impacting these water systems and our main goal continues to be protecting public health. This guidance will help you make important decisions about maintaining your water system during this time.

Maintain Your Water System

Continue to monitor and maintain your water system so businesses and other facilities can reopen quickly and provide safe and reliable water when that happens. Routine operation of pumps, filters, treatment units, and flushing of plumbing will keep water systems operational and reduce the risk of water stagnation. This will prevent increased corrosion leading to possible lead and/or copper scale release and bacterial growth.

If the school, restaurant, church, or business is closed and not serving any residential connections, providing meals, or other services it may be possible to reduce or cease routine monitoring.

Please contact the regional office before the end of the compliance period or scheduled sample date to avoid monitoring violations. If you don't tell us the facilities are closed, we will assume the water system is operating as normal.

Coliform Monitoring

Continue to conduct routine coliform monitoring during closure to ensure safe water within the distribution system. With our approval, it may be possible to reduce the number of samples or the frequency of coliform monitoring. Please contact your [Regional Office's coliform manager](#) to discuss your situation.

Disinfection Residual Monitoring

For systems that are continuously disinfected, daily chlorine residual monitoring at closed facilities may not be possible. However, water systems must submit their disinfection treatment reports each month. If no one is present to access the water, then no chlorine residual monitoring is allowed. Please document this on your reports and submit as normal.

We strongly recommend that you continue to monitor the chlorine residual in the distribution systems even if no one has access to the water. The loss of chlorine residual in the distribution system may increase pipe corrosion and bacteria growth. Monitor the free chlorine, at least

To request this document in another format, call 1-800-525-0127. Deaf or hard of hearing customers, please call 711 ([Washington Relay](#)) or email civil.rights@doh.wa.gov.

weekly, and flush to ensure that a free chlorine residual of greater than 0.20 mg/L is maintained throughout the distribution system and in building plumbing systems.

Chemical Source Monitoring

Chemical source monitoring ensures that the source water isn't contaminated. However, these samples must be collected under routine pumping conditions. Samples shouldn't be collected from wells that haven't been pumped for weeks or months without proper well purging procedures. Water systems serving closed business without water usage shouldn't collect routine chemical source monitoring during this time. Please contact your [Regional Office's source monitoring staff](#) to discuss postponing the scheduled chemical source monitoring during the closure.

Disinfection Byproducts Monitoring

NTNCs that inject chlorine or purchase chlorinated water must monitor for disinfection byproducts (DBPs). DBP monitoring determines the levels of these chemicals in the distribution system. DBPs are formed based on levels of organic compounds in the source water, chlorine added to the water, and the time it takes for the reaction that forms the byproducts to occur. When water sits stagnant in reservoirs and the distribution system due to little or no use, the DBP levels can increase significantly. If no one is consuming or exposed to the water there is low risk. Wait to monitor DBP in water systems that aren't operating at this time. If you are on a quarterly DBP monitoring schedule please contact the [Regional Office DBP specialist](#) or person listed on your WQMS for DBP questions.

Lead and Copper Tap Sampling

NTNCs must sample for lead and copper at taps regularly used for drinking or cooking. Tap sampling evaluates if the water being served to customers is corrosive enough to release potentially harmful levels of lead and copper.

For yearly or triennial lead and copper sampling schedules, samples must be collected June through September unless approved for another 4-month sample period. Some systems may be scheduled for 6-month sample sets. Do not sample closed facilities for lead or copper. Please contact your [Regional Office staff](#) or the person listed on your WQMS for lead and copper taps sample questions to discuss options for monitoring on a different schedule.

Start-up Prior to Re-Opening

Conduct start-up inspections and coliform sampling in water system not maintained during the shut-down. Please contact your regional office prior to opening for monitoring requirements before and after opening.

Follow seasonal start-up and inspection procedures available on our [website](#). These procedures include:

- Flushing stagnant water from plumbing, pressure tanks, and finished water reservoir;
- Disinfecting the system; and
- Collecting coliform bacteria samples prior to people accessing the potable water system.

If your water system has treatment, review the manufacturer's specifications for your treatment systems and follow their start-up procedures.

Once the facilities are open and your water system is back to normal usage, contact us to determine the best time to collect the chemical source samples, DPBs, and lead and copper taps skipped during closure.

More COVID-19 Information and Resources

Stay up-to-date on the [current COVID-19 situation in Washington](#), [Governor Inslee's proclamations](#), [symptoms](#), [how it spreads](#), and [how and when people should get tested](#). See our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) for more information.

The risk of COVID-19 is not connected to race, ethnicity or nationality. [Stigma will not help to fight the illness](#). Share accurate information with others to keep rumors and misinformation from spreading.

- [WA State Department of Health 2019 Novel Coronavirus Outbreak \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [WA State Coronavirus Response \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Find Your Local Health Department or District](#)
- [CDC Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Stigma Reduction Resources](#)

Have more questions about COVID-19? Call our hotline: **1-800-525-0127**. For interpretative services, **press #** when they answer and **say your language**. (Open from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.) For questions about your own health, COVID-19 testing, or testing results, please contact your health care provider.

To request this document in another format, call 1-800-525-0127. Deaf or hard of hearing customers, please call 711 ([Washington Relay](#)) or email civil.rights@doh.wa.gov.